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# East Boston

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**Wednesday, January 8, 2025**

## 2024 Year in Review in Photos

### JANUARY

#### FLOODING IN EAST BOSTON



Flooding around Belle Isle Marsh.



High water behind Shaw's.

MARY CORSO PHOTOS

Mary Corso, a board member of the Harbor Keepers and leader of its kayaking program, went out during the Jan. 12-13 storm and took photos of the flooding im-

pacts on various areas of East Boston. Approximately 1.4 inches of rain fell at Logan Airport and East Boston during the storm that also had strong winds.

### FEBRUARY

#### 11TH STRAIGHT WIN

The Jets continued their remarkable roll, winning their 11th straight after an 0-4 start, taking a 54-

36 win over Boston Latin Academy (10-4) Feb. 2 at East Boston High School.



PHOTO BY BOB MARRA

**FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE:** Eastie's Draggo Tejeda Feliz avoids the defense of Latin forward on the way to the basket.

#### POLAR PLUNGE FOR POLIO VACCINES

The Belle Isle Rotary Club is a combined efforts of the East Boston, Revere and Winthrop communi-

ties. On the morning of Feb. 28, the club held their annual Polar Plunge at the East Boston Yacht Club.



"The Captain" (Tim White) watches over the belly flop contest.

*See Pages 6-8 for more Year in Review*

## Coletta Zapata reflects on third year in office

Special to the Times-Free Press

Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata has released her third Annual Report, summarizing 2024 and marking her second term on the Boston City Council. The report underscores significant achievements for our neighborhoods, including transformative investments, key policy

efforts and community initiatives, and outlining her priorities for the Council and the district in 2025.

"I am proud to share the progress we've made over the past year and initiatives I will continue to champion in the year ahead," said Coletta Zapata. "Through collective efforts, we've driven meaningful change, from

policy actions to community-based efforts. I remain dedicated to being accessible, responsive, and actively engaged with every resident. Serving District One is an honor, and I look forward to building on our successes in 2025 to enhance the district's vibrancy."

The report highlights her work collaborating

with city departments to improve the delivery of constituent services and advocating for infrastructure investments, such as enhancing streets and shared spaces. Her commitment to responsive government aims to improve quality of life for all residents.

See REPORT Page 10

## Bennington Street restaurant presentation to HVNA delayed

By Michael Coughlin Jr.

A restaurant planned for 636-638 Bennington Street, which has drawn the discontentment of residents since it was proposed at an abutters meeting in June, was slated to be presented at the Harbor View Neighborhood Association's (HVNA) latest monthly meeting on Monday; however, it has been postponed.

According to Skip Marcella, an HVNA board member, the presentation for the proposed restaurant called El Parche was delayed at the proponents's

request.

This situation has been ongoing since at least June when the proponents outlined their plans to open a 40-seat restaurant with the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. at the property.

These plans, including requests for a beer, wine, and cordials license, a common victualler license, and live entertainment from the licensing board, were met with significant opposition at June's abutters meeting.

Specifically, residents

See HVNA Page 10

## ADRIAN MADARO SWORN-IN AS STATE REPRESENTATIVE



CARY SHUMAN PHOTO

State Rep. Adrian Madaro of East Boston was sworn-in for the 2025-26 session during an impressive ceremony Wednesday, Jan. 1 in the House Chamber. Rep. Madaro (left) is pictured before the ceremony with House Ways and Means Chair Aaron Michlewitz.

## Cartwright sworn in as Clerk of Supreme Judicial Court

Special to the Times-Free Press

Allison S. Cartwright, Esq., was sworn in January 1 as Clerk of the Supreme Judicial Court for the County of Suffolk by SJC Chief Justice Kimberly S. Budd, in a ceremony that took place in the Great

Hall of the John Adams Courthouse in Boston.

Attorney Cartwright was elected in November 2024 by the voters of Suffolk County to become the SJC Clerk for the County

See CARTWRIGHT Page 11



PHOTO COURTESY JOHN WILCOX/BOSTON MAYOR'S OFFICE

Attorney Allison S. Cartwright is sworn in by SJC Chief Justice Kimberly S. Budd.

For the latest news in East Boston that you need to know, check [eastietimes.com](http://eastietimes.com)

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VERONICA ROBLES CULTURAL CENTER HOLDS DÍA DE LOS REYES MAGOS CELEBRATION



DEREK KOUYOUJIAN PHOTOS

Emily is happy to be here at Three Kings Day with her koala friend.

The Veronica Robles Cultural Center had a celebration for Día de Los Reyes Magos, or Three Kings Day. The Three Kings who were guided by the Christmas Star to



Eduardo Santillan with his daughter Amanda.

the manger where Joseph, Mary, and the Infant Jesus received gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Here after the Three Kings arrive, children visit with them and receive a gift



Yareli Figuerola got a geode kit.



Valentina Caballero with her mother Margot.



Sebastian Zapata as one of the Three Kings makes his way to the stage.



James and Madeline are happy with their gifts.



Veronica Robles with Anyelo Betancur as Joseph, Sandra Payan as Mary holding the Infant Jesus, and Thiommy Caraballo as The Angel.



Alan Marcus with his mom Linda meet one of The Three Kings portrayed by Jhon Cardozo.



Antonella with her family and new doll.



Daniela Mensoza and Valentina Caballero on stage with Mary with the Infant Jesus portrayed by Sandra Payan.



After visiting with the Three Kings, each child received a gift.



Veronica Robles poses on the stage with teachers and students from her Center.



Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata and Veronica Robles with Jhon Cardozo, Orlando Rosario, and Sebastian Zapata as the Three Kings, and Thiommy Caraballo as The Angel, Sandra Payan as Mary holding the Infant Jesus, and Anyelo Betancur as Joseph.



Veronica Robles leads her students in singing Christmas Carols.



VERONICA ROBLES CULTURAL CENTER HOLDS DÍA DE LOS REYES MAGOS CELEBRATION

DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN PHOTOS



Children in the audience look at the pile of toys waiting to go home with lucky winners of the raffle.



Kathy Segura, Eddy Rivera, and Lumyr Derisier with Massachusetts Health Connector were promoting the agency's mission of bringing everyone in our state the best health insurance possible.



Boston City Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata with Joseph Anyelo Betancur as Joseph, Sandra Payan as Mary holding the Infant Jesus, and Thiommy Caraballo as The Angel.



Isabelle Amaya got a new doll after her visit with The Three Kings.



Raffle winners come up to the stage to get a gift after their numbers are called.



Students at the Veronica Robles Cultural Center sing Christmas carols.



A centerpiece celebrating Three Kings Day at VROCC.



VROCC student Daniela Mensoza with her family.



The Veronica Robles Cultural Center had an audience that helped with the ambience of celebrating the holiday.







# Sports

## THE EAST BOSTON JETS IN HOCKEY ACTION AGAINST LOWELL



Mauricio Feloney (4) works his way along the boards.



Goaltender Finn Kempanien (30) is focused on making the save as Frankie McLaughlin (23) defends in a scramble in front of the East Boston net.



Cam Perry (2) works his way around a Lowell defender.



Frankie McLaughlin (23) checks a Lowell forward behind the East Boston net.



JJ Tritto (5) dodges his way through mid-ice traffic.

Hockey season is underway for the East Boston Jets and though the season has gotten off to a slow start for coach Pat McGoff's crew, good

goaltending and a handful of experienced players will give the Jets some hard-earned success this season. The Jets lost to Lowell in a December 26

game at Porrazzo Rink and return to action playing Everett January 8 at 5 p.m. at home.

PHOTOS BY BOB MARRA



Frankie McLaughlin (23) battles a pair of Lowell players for a loose puck.



Ulises Rodriguez (28) puts a hit on a Lowell forward against the boards.

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Starkist Solid White Canned Tuna.....	4/¢5.00
Best Yet Frozen Potatoes .....	2/¢6.00
Best Yet Frozen Waffles .....	2/¢4.00
Pepperidge Farm Garlic Bread .....	2/¢5.00
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Fair Life Milk .....	2/¢9.00

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8" Baked Cherry Pie .....	¢7.99
Juniors' Little Fella's Cheesecake.....	¢2.89

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Fresh & Crisp Cucumbers .....	59¢
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Fresh & Crisp Green Bell Peppers.....	¢1.99/lb
Fresh Sweet & Delicious Mangos.....	2/¢3.00

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Krakus Imported Polish Ham.....	¢6.99 /lb
Carando Mortadella .....	¢6.99 /lb
Kretschmar Honey Turkey Breast .....	¢8.99 /lb
Corner Shop Swiss Cheese .....	¢6.99 /lb
Margherita Hot Cappicola .....	¢6.99 /lb

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Chicken Pot Pie 12oz. ....	2/¢8.00
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Cinnamon Elephant Ears 2pk .....	¢2.99

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------------------------------------	----------

##### PRODUCE

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##### MEAT

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# 2024 Year in Review in Photos

## MARCH

### EAST BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTER TO REBRAND AS NEIGHBORHEALTH



A rendering of Neighborhood Health’s Maverick location with the updated signage.

During an announcement to its nearly 2,000 employees, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC) outlined plans to rebrand its health system, which serves more than 120,000 people and has an operating budget of \$270 million. The largest community-based primary care health system in Massachusetts announced it will become NeighborHealth in June 2024, taking on a new name and visual identity.

### FIGUEROA NAMED COACH OF THE YEAR



Coach of the Year Award was presented to EB High boys basketball coach Tyrone Figueroa (standing fourth from right) at the all-star game held at Emmanuel College on Thursday, March 14. Coach Figueroa and his capable staff led the Jets to an appearance in the city league play-offs and record of 1-1 in the state tournament round and an overall record of 17-6. Representing the team from East Boston were seniors Javon Wise-Normil, Draggio Tejeda Feliz and Christian Sanders (seated).

## APRIL

### THE APRIL 2024 ECLIPSE



A series of photos by a Revere resident show the path of the eclipse as it passed overhead on Monday, April 8.

### EBCCS HOLDS 50TH ANNIVERSARY LEGACY GALA



Alumni, faculty, and members of the Most Holy Redeemer and Sacred Heart Parishes gathered on April 12 for East Boston Central Catholic School’s (EBCCS) 50th Anniversary Legacy Gala at Spinelli’s Function Facility. Shown above, Principal Robert Casaletto with his mother, Roberta Casaletto, librarian, daughter, Ashley, wife, Toni, daughter, Courtney, and son, Bobby.

## MAY

### THIRD ANNUAL MARATHON DAFFODIL DASH



The third annual Marathon Daffodil Dash was held on The Track at Suffolk Downs. Above, the 9-and-10-year-olds start their run. Right, runners are cheered on by fellow runners.

### EAST BOSTON MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY



The Boston Fire Department Honor Guard presenting the colors.

The East Boston Memorial Day Ceremony was held in Central Square on May 27 in honor of the 37,000 Massachusetts residents who lost their lives in service to the country since the Revolutionary War.

## JUNE

### EBHS CLASS OF 2024



East Boston High School 144th Graduation Exercises at Sartori Stadium. On Friday, June 14, 240 students received their diplomas in front of family and friends at Sartori Stadium behind Logan Airport.

### SALESIAN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB HOLDS ANNUAL SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION, FUNDRAISER



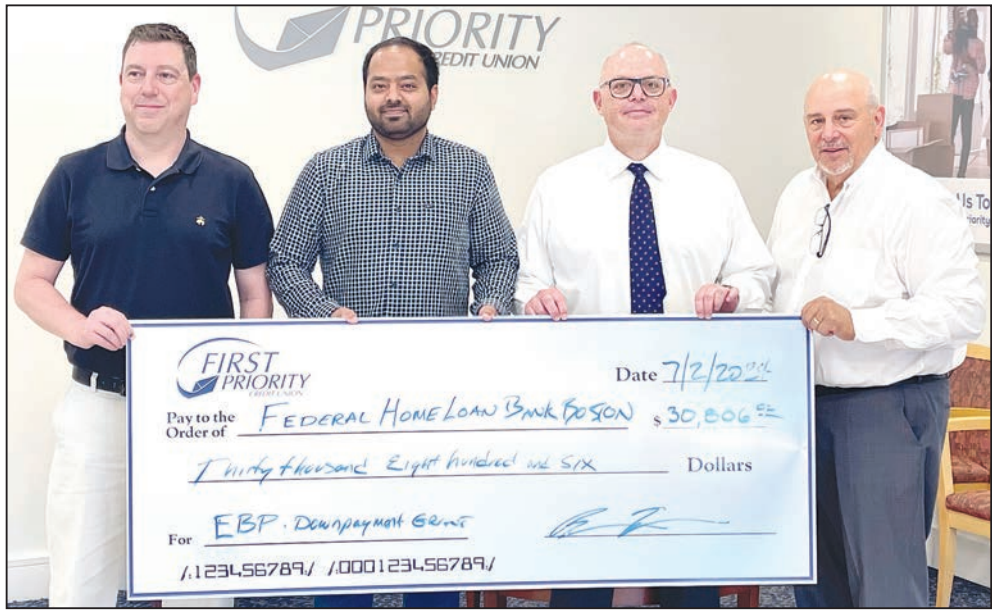
The Salesian Boys & Girls Club hosted its 15th Annual Summer Camp Scholarship Auction & Fundraiser in the newly renovated gymnasium on June 20. Shown are Revere Councilor-at-Large Tony Zambuto, Jim Kearney, trustee of the East Boston Foundation, Michael Triant, Salesian Boys & Girls Club Executive Director, Josh Kraft, President of the New England Patriots Foundation, Representative Adrian Madaro, and Councilor Gigi Coletta Zapata.



2024 Year in Review in Photos

JULY

THE GO-TO PLACE IN EAST BOSTON



First Priority Credit Union’s Vice President and Lending Manager, Steve Borgerson (third from the left) is seen here presenting First Time Home Buyer Safi S. (second from the left) with a check for \$30,806 which was used for down payment and closing cost assistance for the purchase of his new condo in Winthrop. First Priority Credit Union was able to secure the down payment assistance grant through the Credit Union’s Partnership with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston. The FHLBB’s Equity Builder Program provides grant funds to assist qualified First Time Home Buyers with the purchase of a primary residence. Safi was the second credit union member that they able to secure grant funds for. Said Mr. Borgerson “with affordable housing being such a challenge for the average person the credit union was happy to participate in the Equity Builder Program and make home ownership possible for two of our members”. Also seen in the picture is Brian Spehar, Sr. Underwriter at FPCU (first from the left) and attorney Joseph Cattoggio (forth from the left), who facilitated the sale of the property.

MAIN STREETS HOLD TASTE OF EASTIE



East Boston Main Streets (EBMS) presented the 28th Annual Taste of Eastie on July 23 at the outdoor waterfront venue, The Tall Ship. Shown (above) are members of Charlesgate Realty, one of the event sponsors. Shown (right) Mi Pueblito Orient Heights serving nachos and guacamole to guests.



ZUMIX HOSTS ANNUAL WALK FOR MUSIC



One of the inaugural events of Eastie Week is the Walk For Music presented by Zumix. It is a parade to celebrate music and community as teachers, students, and their supporters of the East Boston educational resource march with a brass band and celebrate the creativity of East Boston.

AUGUST

EASTIE ON THE LINKS ANNUAL FUNDRAISER



Tracy Hollander, Frank Borriello, Erich Sbraccia, and John Moore shown above making their way across the course at Ferncroft Country Club during the annual “Eastie on the Links” golf tournament fundraiser for East Boston Central Catholic School.

VIVA COLOMBIA BOSTON FESTIVAL



The Veronica Robles Cultural Center and the Colombian Cultural Heritage Committee held the 3rd Viva Colombia Boston Festival. Shown (above) Border Street behind the Veronica Robles Cultural Center was packed with attendees for the Columbian Festival.

EAST BOSTON CELEBRATES EASTIE PRIDE DAY



August 17 was a great day to spend celebrating the long history and heritage of East Boston at Piers Park at the annual Eastie Pride Day. Above, East Boston Piers Park Sailing Program, Santi Plaza, Christian Holt, Libby Carney, Aviel Lanzo, Aline Lanzo, and Ve Thar enjoying the day. Right, Ayla DaSilva and Arianna Miranda had their faces painted.



Flu and COVID season is here!

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2024 Year in Review in Photos

SEPTEMBER

REMEMBERING SEPT. 11 ATTACKS  
IN CEREMONY AT PIERS PARK



First Responders from the Boston Police, Boston Fire, and Massport were on hand for the ceremony.

EAST BOSTON HOLDS OPEN STREETS

Bennington Street, from Day Square to Central Square, was closed to traffic during the City of Boston’s Open Streets on September 15.



Neighbors exploring local vendors along Bennington Street during Open Streets on September 15.

OCTOBER

NEIGHBORHEALTH ANNOUNCES MAJOR  
CLINICAL CARE EXPANSION TO MEET  
COMMUNITY NEED FOR PRIMARY CARE

NeighborHealth, formerly East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, announced a multi-faceted clinical space expansion at the community health system’s 20 Maverick Square outpatient facility adjacent to MBTA’s Maverick Station in East Boston. This multi-year, two-part construction project is part of NeighborHealth’s ongoing efforts to extend access to healthcare and social services across Greater Boston in response to the Commonwealth’s ongoing healthcare capacity challenges.



Shown (left to right) are John Gioioso, Vice President, Campus Operations, NeighborHealth; Marianne Grenham, Senior Director, Adult Medicine, NeighborHealth; James Murnane, Site Manager, Wise Construction; Dr. Catherine Silva, Medical Director, Adult Medicine, NeighborHealth; Dr. Ryan Boxill, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, NeighborHealth; Greg Wilmot, President and CEO, NeighborHealth; and Hollis Graham, Associate Vice President, Strategy, NeighborHealth.

ITALIAN AMERICAN ALLIANCE CELEBRATES  
COLUMBUS DAY AT TALL SHIP PARK IN EASTIE

October 14 was celebrated as Columbus Day, and in the Italian community it’s a means to celebrate their heritage with family, fun, and food. The Italian American Alliance Committee hosted a celebration at Pier 1 in East Boston, complete with a tall ship background.



The Italian American Alliance at the 2024 Columbus Day Celebration at 1 East Pier Drive in East Boston.

NOVEMBER

THE VERONICA ROBLES CULTURAL CENTER  
PRESENTS DAY OF THE DEAD CELEBRATION



DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN PHOTO

The Veronica Robles Cultural Center presented its Day Of The Dead celebration which included a parade. The parade ended at Central Square where music and dancing entertained all who attended.

EAST BOSTON HOLDS  
VETERANS DAY SERVICES



The East Boston JROTC Color Guard (above) was on hand for the East Boston Veterans Day ceremony to post the colors on Monday morning at 11a.m. on the 11th day of the 11th month. Shown are Lt. Colonel Lee Fife, Cadets Sophia Moran, Brian Rodriguez, Lily Moran and Samuel Taranto.

DECEMBER

FIRST PRIORITY CREDIT UNION  
HOLDS ‘MEET SANTA’ EVENT



PHOTO BY MARIANNE SALZA

A red carpet led to Santa at First Priority Credit Union’s second Meet Santa event on December 7. The free community gathering featured pictures with Santa, taken by professional photographer, Quinn Barbour.

THE MADARO FOUNDATION HOSTS  
ANNUAL EASTIE’S ELVES TOY DRIVE AT THE  
HARBORSIDE HYATT IN EAST BOSTON



Eastie’s Elves Toy Drive /Dinner Dance tradition has brought smiles and happiness to thousands of children around the East Boston Community, and now has expanded its range to include the communities of Revere and Winthrop. Shown are Representative Madaro with his staff that worked tirelessly making Eastie’s Elves a success. Front: Jessica Bresler, Gabriela Ramirez, Steven Gingras, Marcela Lopez-Romero, Brianna Pereira, and Gloribel Rivas-Soldz. Back: Thomas Baranowski, and Garrett Kirk.



# More than one-third of Christmas tree home fires occur in Jan.

More than one-third (36 percent) of U.S. home fires involving Christmas trees occur in January. With this post-holiday fire hazard in mind, the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) strongly encourages everyone to dispose of Christmas trees promptly after the holiday season.

“As much as we all enjoy the look and feel of Christmas trees in our homes, they’re large combustible items that have the potential to result in serious fires,” said Lorraine Carli, vice president of Outreach and Advocacy at NFPA.

According to NFPA data, Christmas tree fires don’t happen often, but when they do occur, they’re more likely to be serious. That’s in part because fresh Christmas trees dry out over time, making them more flammable the longer they’re in the home. A dried-out Christmas tree will burn much more quickly than a well-watered one.

Between 2018 and 2022, there was an estimated annual average of 155 home structure fires that began with Christmas

trees, resulting in four civilian deaths, seven civilian injuries, and \$15 million in direct property damage.

“Fires that begin with Christmas trees represent a very small but notable part of the U.S. fire problem, considering that they are generally in use for a short time each year,” said Carli.

To safely dispose of a Christmas tree, NFPA recommends using the local community’s recycling program, if possible; trees should not be put in the garage or left outside. NFPA also offers these tips for safely removing lighting and decorations to ensure that they remain in good condition:

- Use the gripping area on the plug when unplugging electrical decora-

tions. Never pull the cord to unplug any device from an electrical outlet, as this can harm the wire and insulation of the cord, increasing the risk for shock or electrical fire.

- As you pack up light strings, inspect each line for damage, throwing out any sets that have loose connections, broken sockets or cracked or bare wires.
- Wrap each set of lights and put them in individual plastic bags or wrap them around a piece of cardboard.
- Store electrical decorations in a dry place away from children and pets where they will not be damaged by water or dampness.

For this release and other announcements about NFPA initiatives, research,

and resources, please visit the NFPA press room.

Founded in 1896, NFPA® is a global, self-funded, nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. The association delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission. For more information, visit [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org). All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed online for free at [www.nfpa.org/freeaccess](http://www.nfpa.org/freeaccess).

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Docket No. SU24P2775EA  
Estate of: Herbert Stuart Cohen  
Also known as: Herbert S. Cohen, Herbert Cohen, Herb Cohen  
Date of Death: 12/11/2024  
To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Kathryn R. Cohen of Barrington, NH requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: Kathryn R. Cohen of Barrington, NH be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond unsupervised administration. IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/06/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty days (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you. UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. WITNESS, Hon. Brian J. Dunn, First Justice of this Court. Date: December 26, 2024 Stephanie L. Everett, Esq. Register of Probate 01/08/25 EB

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CITY PAWS

Quality of life

By Penny & Ed Cherubino

Our furry family members need more from us than regular feeding, walking, and routine health care. They need us to be concerned about the quality of their lives.

If you have a dog or a cat, you want to do everything possible to keep your animal happy and healthy. However, finding time to do things that can improve their quality of life may be challenging. To overcome this, resolve to form new habits and set a few goals for the new year.

**Dedicated Time**  
You know the activities you love to do with your dog or cat. However, you should also think about the activities your little pal loves to do with you. It could be a play session when you toss a toy or wiggle an interactive cat teaser. Recognizing joyful moments can take careful observation. Plan to do more of it once you know what fills your animal’s life with bliss.  
On the other hand, you also know what activities cause your pet stress and fear, diminishing their quality of life. You should

take whatever steps are needed to support the animal through difficult situations and desensitize them as best you can. For example, you might visit the grooming parlor or veterinary office and have the staff give your pet a treat between scheduled visits.

**Learn To Do The Basics**  
You are the one most likely to spot something abnormal with your cat and the one who speaks for your dog when he needs medical care. A quick home check-up regularly might save the an-

imal some pain and you some money.  
Routine, at-home dental care is one of the most important (but often neglected) quality-of-life care a pet guardian can provide. If you can set a routine to brush your critter’s teeth at least once or, at best, twice a day, it can help prevent pain and a cascade of health issues from periodontal disease.

**Make Your Home Pet-Friendly**  
Does your cat have places to climb, not only because cats love to climb, but also to get away from dogs, children, (or even you) when she wants to be left alone?  
We often notice cats and sometimes dogs perched in windows. Does your little friend love to watch the world go by or keep track of the birds in the trees? If you don’t have wide window sills, do what you can to provide a comfortable and secure perch. And, be sure there is no possibility



PHOTO BY PIOTR MUSIOL

Your cat’s purr is an excellent sign that she is enjoying your moment together.

of a fall out of the window.  
Safety is another issue. In our tech-filled world, we run wired chargers here, there, and everywhere. These can be tempting to little friends who spend far more time on the floor looking around than we do. Keep those devices unplugged or out of reach when you aren’t using them.  
Finally, educate yourself about foods, plants, household products, and odd dangers from ribbons that cats might ingest to stray socks that a big dog might eat.  
The saddest assess-

ment of the quality of life required of any animal guardian is when their pet’s health drastically reduces their enjoyment of life. With our pets, we are allowed to end suffering. However, before you make that decision, check your options. It may be that more specialized veterinary care, a new medication, or a mobility aid could make a difference.

*Do you have a question or topic for City Paws? Send an email to Penny@BostonZest.com with your request.*

State Fire Marshal offers cold snap heating safety tips

With temperatures expected to dip into the teens overnight this week, Massachusetts State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine is reminding residents to stay warm safely and protect their loved ones from some of the most common home heating fires.

“We’re expecting very cold weather in the nights ahead, and home heating appliances will be working overtime,” said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. “Heating equipment is the leading cause of carbon monoxide at home and the second leading cause of residential fires. Whether you’re using gas, oil, solid fuel, or space heaters to keep warm, be sure you keep safe, too.”

State Fire Marshal Davine said there were nearly 6,000 heating fires in Massachusetts from 2019 to 2023. These fires claimed eight lives, caused 139 injuries to firefighters and residents, and contributed to over \$42 million in damage. And in 2023 alone, Massachusetts fire departments reported finding carbon monoxide at nearly 5,000 non-fire incidents.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Every household needs working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every level of their home. Check the manufacturing date on the back of your alarms so you know when to replace them: smoke alarms should be replaced after 10 years, and carbon monoxide alarms should be replaced after 5 to 10 years depending on the model. If your alarms take alkaline batteries, put in fresh batteries twice a year when you change your clocks. If it’s time to replace your alarms, choose new ones from a well-known, national brand. Select smoke alarms with a sealed, long-life battery and a hush feature.

Natural Gas and Oil Heat

If you have a furnace, water heater, or oil burner, have it professionally

checked and serviced each year. This will help it run more efficiently, which will save you money and could save your life. Always keep a three-foot “circle of safety” around the appliance clear of anything that could catch fire. Never store painting supplies, aerosol cans, or other flammable items near these appliances. If you smell gas, don’t use any electrical switches or devices: get out, stay out, and call 9-1-1 right away.

Residents struggling to pay for heating bills or maintenance may be eligible for assistance through the Massachusetts home energy assistance program (HEAP). No matter what type of heating equipment you use, HEAP may be able to help you pay your winter heating bills or maintain your heating system. All Massachusetts residents are encouraged to explore eligibility for this free program and apply for assistance.

Solid Fuel Heating

If you use a fireplace or a stove that burns wood, pellets, or coal, always keep the area around it clear for three feet in all directions. This circle of safety should be free of furniture, drapery, rugs, books and papers, fuel, and any other flammable items. To prevent sparks and embers from escaping, use a fireplace screen or keep the stove door closed while burning. Use only dry, seasoned hardwood and don’t use flammable liquids to start the fire. To dispose of ashes, wait until they are cool and shovel them into a metal bucket with a lid and place it outside at least 10 feet away from the building.

Have your chimney and flue professionally inspected and cleaned each year. Most chimney fires are caused by burning creosote, a tarry substance that builds up as the fireplace, wood stove, or pellet stove is used. If burning creosote, sparks, embers, or hot gases escape through cracks in the

flue or chimney, they can cause a fire that spreads to the rest of the structure. Annual cleaning and inspection can minimize this risk. Contact the Massachusetts Chimney Sweep Guild or Chimney Safety Institute of America to identify reputable local companies.

Space Heaters

Keep space heaters at least three feet from curtains, bedding, and anything else that can burn. Plug them directly into a wall socket, not an extension cord or a power strip, and remember that they’re for temporary use. Always turn a space heater off when you leave the room or go to sleep.

When purchasing a space heater, select one that’s been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or Intertek (ETL). Newer space heaters should have an automatic shut-off switch that turns the device off if it tips over. Unvented kerosene space heaters and portable propane space heaters are not permitted for residential use in Massachusetts, State Fire Marshal Davine said: the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning that they pose is too great.

Create and Practice a Home Escape Plan

Everyone should have a home escape plan that accounts for two ways out of every room, and everyone should be able to open the doors and windows along the way. Remember that children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need extra assistance.

More Home Heating Safety Tips

The Department of Fire Services offers a wealth of home heating safety information, including the “Keep Warm, Keep Safe” tool kit for local fire departments, caregivers, and service providers, on the DFS web site.

selors are available to help you apply for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), find free meals for children, and locate emergency food programs like community meals and food pantries. The hotline can also refer callers to other federal food programs, like WIC (Women, Infants, and Children).  
Whether you’re a college student, a senior, or a family facing hardship, the FoodSource Hotline is a confidential, free, trusted resource recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Elementary

and Secondary Education for anyone seeking food assistance.  
Call Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. or Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for support, available in over 180 languages.  
Get Help Now: If you are struggling with food insecurity, call 1-800-645-8333. For more information and access to resources, visit Project Bread’s website, where you can find information in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole. Don’t wait—help is just a phone call away.

HVNA // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

who spoke out against the project were dissatisfied with the late closing time and alcohol being served in a location with a large number of children. Those opposed also outlined issues with trash, rodents, and more concerns.  
Then, another abutters meeting was held in September, and the proposal was updated. Specifically, the number of seats dropped to 20, and the hours changed from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.  
Additionally, it was noted at this time that the proponents would also be going before the Zoning Board of Appeal to change the building’s occupancy from a beauty salon to a restaurant, expand the bathroom to make it handicap accessible, and do additional work like painting and framing.

Although changes were made to the project, many maintained their outright opposition to the project.  
As recently as October, Marcella indicated at an HVNA meeting that there were 47 letters from abutters and 173 signatures from residents who opposed the project.  
Following the announcement that the presentation would be delayed, Marcella stated that the tentative plan is for it to occur at the association’s meeting next month.  
He noted that the February presentation was tentative because HVNA bylaws require developers to complete a project form.  
“This project form is one of the requirements that we have before you come up here and present your project, and that’s something that this particular propo-

nent for 636-638 [Bennington Street] has not been able to provide over the past two months,” said Marcella.  
Marcella also urged those in attendance interested in reiterating their position in support or opposition to the project to contact Eva Jones, a city community engagement specialist, by email at [eva.jones2@boston.gov](mailto:eva.jones2@boston.gov), citing the long, ongoing process.  
Ultimately, he mentioned that if the project were to be presented to the HVNA in February, a vote would happen after a second presentation occurs.  
For more information about the HVNA, visit its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/harborviewna/> or its website at <https://harborvieweastboston.com/>. The group’s next meeting is scheduled for February 3.

Report // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In 2024, the City Council had its third opportunity to influence the budget. Coletta Zapata hosted four town halls to gather input from constituents on priorities, such as youth programs, ESOL classes for parents, affordable housing, and upgrades to city services. For FY26, her budget priorities include investments in rodent mitigation, expanding housing vouchers, increasing pest control inspections, and expanding resources for law enforcement and public health.  
Throughout the year, Coletta Zapata advanced a comprehensive policy agenda, focusing on both the practical functions and long-term goals for the city. Notable initiatives include:

- The exploration of a municipal Climate Bank to stimulate economic development, create green jobs, and address climate chal-

lenges.

- Establishing the Office of Climate Resilience to accelerate waterfront fortification efforts.
- Launching a Food Cart Pilot Program to support food vendors in establishing businesses without the costs of brick-and-mortar locations.
- Advocating for the expansion of affordable housing, including right-vouchers, increasing pest control inspections, and increasing housing inspections.
- Introducing a Home Rule Petition to address public safety personnel shortages by raising the Boston Police Department’s maximum age for candidates.

Additionally, Coletta Zapata served as Chair of both the Government Operations Committee and the Environmental Justice, Resiliency & Parks Committee. Under her leadership,

the City Council passed several critical ordinances, including the creation of a Planning Department, measures to promote safe and healthy hotels, and the establishment of an Office of Labor Compliance and Worker Protections.  
In the new year, Councilor Coletta Zapata is excited to continue advocating for District 1 with a robust policy agenda. Coletta Zapata encourages residents to contact her office for a meeting to discuss suggestions and ideas for solving the most persistent issues. To see her 2024 Annual Report in full, please visit [bit.ly/GCZ\\_Report](https://bit.ly/GCZ_Report) for English and [bit.ly/GCZ\\_Report](https://bit.ly/GCZ_Report) for Spanish.  
For additional information please contact the Office of Councilor Gabriela Coletta by phone at (617) 635-3200 or by email at [gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov](mailto:gabriela.ramirez@boston.gov).



# Snow thrower safety tips: keep best practices in mind this winter

Clearing snow and ice from driveways, side-walks and parking lots is no small job. You rely on your outdoor power equipment to do the heavy lifting, and it’s important to keep safety in mind. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) reminds home and business owners to use snow throwers, often referred to as snow blowers, safely and offers tips to help.

“Weather today is unpredictable. You need to have your snow thrower serviced and ready to power up,” says OPEI President and CEO Kris Kiser. “Review your owner’s manual so you can use your equipment safely.” Kiser says preparation is key and that home and business owners should consider the following:

Review the owner’s manual. Check the owner’s manual for safe handling procedures. If the manual cannot be found, look it up online, and store a copy on your computer so it’s available to refer-



The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute reminds home and business owners to use snow throwers, often referred to as snow blowers, safely and offers tips to help.

ence in the future. Review how to operate controls. Be able to shut off equipment quickly.

Check equipment. The snow thrower should be powered off when being checked over. Adjust any cables and check the auger.

Charge batteries. Locate the batteries for your snow thrower and charge them fully before it snows.

Purchase fuel. Be sure to use the correct fuel recommended by the

equipment’s manufacturer. For most gasoline-powered snow throwers, that is E10 or less. Often fuel stations are closed after a storm so buy gasoline in advance of storms. Fuel that is more than 30 days old can phase separate and cause operating problems. For more information on fueling properly see [www.opei.org/programs/ethanolwarning](http://www.opei.org/programs/ethanolwarning)

Store and use fuel properly. Place gasoline in a proper fuel container and

label it with the date purchased and the ethanol content. Store fuel safely and out of the reach of children. Fill the fuel tank outside before starting the engine and while the engine is cold. Never add fuel to a running or hot engine.

Clear the area. Snow can sometimes hide objects. Doormats, hoses, balls, toys, boards, wires, and other debris should be removed from areas you intend to clear. When run over by a snow thrower, these objects may harm the machine or people.

Dress for winter weather. Locate safety gear now, and place it in an accessible closet or location. Wear safety glasses, gloves and footwear that can handle cold and slippery surfaces when operating the snow thrower.

**Key Safety Tip:** Never put your hands inside the auger or chute. Use a clean out tool to unclog snow or debris from the snow thrower. Your hands should never go inside the

auger or chute.

Turn OFF the snow thrower if you need to clear a clog. If you need to remove debris or unclog snow, always turn off the snow thrower. Wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before clearing any clogs or debris.

Operate in visible conditions. Never operate the snow thrower without good visibility or light.

Aim with care. Never throw snow toward people or cars. Keep children or pets inside and away from your snow thrower when it is operating.

Use extreme caution on slopes and hills. Use caution when changing directions on slopes. Do not attempt to clear steep slopes.

Know where the cord is. If using an electric powered snow thrower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times. Avoid tripping.

OPEI is an international trade association representing manufacturers

and suppliers of power equipment, small engines, battery power systems, portable generators, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars. OPEI is the advocacy voice of the industry, and a recognized Standards Development Organization for the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and active internationally through the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) in the development of safety and performance standards. OPEI owns Equip Exposition, the international landscape, outdoor living and equipment exposition, and administers the Turf-Mutt Foundation, which directs the environmental education program, TurfMutt. OPEI-Canada represents members on a host of issues, including recycling, emissions and other regulatory developments across the Canadian provinces.

## Cartwright // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of Suffolk, and fills the position being vacated by Maura Sweeney Doyle, Esq. Clerk Doyle was appointed to the position in 1996, and was subsequently elected in 1998, serving for 28 years before retiring on December 21, 2024. Attorney Cartwright is the second woman and first black person to hold this position since its inception in 1693.

“For nearly three decades, we have been fortunate to have Maura Doyle serving in this position, and she has done so with professionalism, passion, and dedication,” said Chief Justice Kimberly S. Budd. “Today, we are equally fortunate to have Allison Cartwright step-

ping into this role. As an experienced lawyer and manager, she is well prepared to lead the county clerk’s office, and my colleagues and I look forward to working with her.”

The SJC Clerk for the County of Suffolk is responsible for the management of the Court’s single justice caseload, which is comprised of petitions seeking review of lower court rulings under the SJC’s general superintendency power and various rules of court; bail review; appeals from State registration boards and agencies; all matters relating to Bar Admission and the practice of law in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and administrative disci-

plinary matters filed by the Board of Bar Overseers affecting members of the bar.

“I am excited and honored to have the privilege of serving as the next Clerk of the SJC for the County of Suffolk,” said Attorney Cartwright. “My team and I recognize the important role the Clerk’s Office has to ensure that our state’s highest court maintains its independence and delivers justice in a manner that is fair, equitable, and accessible to the people of Massachusetts.”

Retired Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Roderick L. Ireland served as Master of Ceremonies. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Attorney Cartwright’s son, Jonathan

S. Cartwright. Mr. Meyer Chambers, the Director of the Archdiocese of Boston Black Catholic Choir, led a musical rendition of America the Beautiful (arr. by Ray Charles). Speakers included Boston Mayor Michelle Wu and State Sen. Lydia M. Edwards. Rev. Rahsaan Hall, Esq., Associate Minister of St. Paul AME Church in Cambridge, delivered the Benediction.

Attorney Cartwright be-

gan her career at the Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS), as a trial attorney, working in the Roxbury office for four years. She then worked for the City of Boston as Assistant Corporation Counsel, before opening Cartwright & Coleman, a civil and criminal litigation law firm, from 1997 to 2001. In 2001, she opened Cartwright Law Office. During that time, she also mentored attorneys for

the Suffolk Lawyers for Justice, Inc; from 2011 to 2019, she worked as the organization’s Supervising Attorney. In 2019, she returned to CPCS as Attorney-In-Charge and then Managing Director of the Central Region, where she managed offices in in Suffolk and Norfolk Counties.

Attorney Cartwright is a graduate of University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Boston College Law School.

## Bill // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

on medical malpractice insurers from discriminating against health care practitioners who provide harm reduction services. It further updates requirements for insurance providers to ensure adequate coverage and access to pain management services including non-opioid treatments and expands access to non-opioid pain treatment by incorporating non-opioid alternatives into provider training.

No person should face discrimination because of substance use disorder or receiving medication for it in the past. This legislation therefore clarifies DPH’s authority to enforce anti-discrimination protections for people with SUD who are covered by public health insurance and prohibits discrimination against those lawfully possessing or taking medication for opioid-related SUD treatment.

Further, the bill protects public health and harm reduction organizations and their agents from professional disciplinary action or civil or criminal liability if they are providing drug checking services in good faith. It also protects individuals from criminal liability when seeking treatment from such organizations. This change should help detect and protect against deadly contaminants that are increasingly found in the drug supply.

In addition, the bill promotes the recovery of pregnant people on med-

ications for substance use disorder by clarifying that encountering a substance-exposed newborn does not trigger an automatic referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). It further directs DCF to lead the creation of regulations related to care, treatment, and reporting of substance-exposed newborns.

It also establishes recovery coach licensing in the Commonwealth and

places oversight under the DPH, to ensure compliance with best practices. Under this bill, insurance companies would be required to cover services provided by licensed recovery coaches.

A fact sheet with additional highlights of the compromise legislation is available online.

Having passed the Legislature, the bill now heads to the Governor’s desk for her signature.

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While faith is the binding element in Catholic schools, the Church reiterates that parents are the first teachers of their children. Holding this tenet, Catholic school communities expand beyond the walls of school buildings to envelop the family as an integral part of the school community. Together teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents fuel the light of faith by integrating culture with faith and faith with living.

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NOAH HOLDS 37TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER DINNER

Photos by Marianne Salza

Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) celebrated its anniversary with its 37th Annual Din-

ner, attended by residents, board members, and city leaders on December 18, at Spinelli's. The fundraiser included a silent auction and special appearance by

keynote speaker, Cecy del Carmen, a bilingual meteorologist, who is a passionate advocate for climate change education.



Jim Dougherty, ESOL teacher, with his students, Ramiro Garcia and Doris Zappata



Estefany Jimenez with her English Level II teacher, John Abbott.



Gladys Orellana-Vega, NOAH staff, Nathalie Kallab Racimo, Thais Gandica, and Carlos Grajales-Thrall, NOAH staff.



Monica Bareera, NOAH board member, Roxanna Aguirre, NOAH volunteer, Odette Esobar, NOAH volunteer, Olga Basco, Kristel Aguirre Gomez, NOAH Youth/Community Building Environment, and Elizabeth Silva.



Phil Giffie, NOAH Executive Director



David Bryant, NOAH Board Chair, acknowledging board members.



A NOAH Dinner guest enjoying the celebration.



Carlos Sanchez, Amanda Schabowich, United Way, Joe Tighe, Marvin Rocha, United Way, and Christine Niccoli, United Way



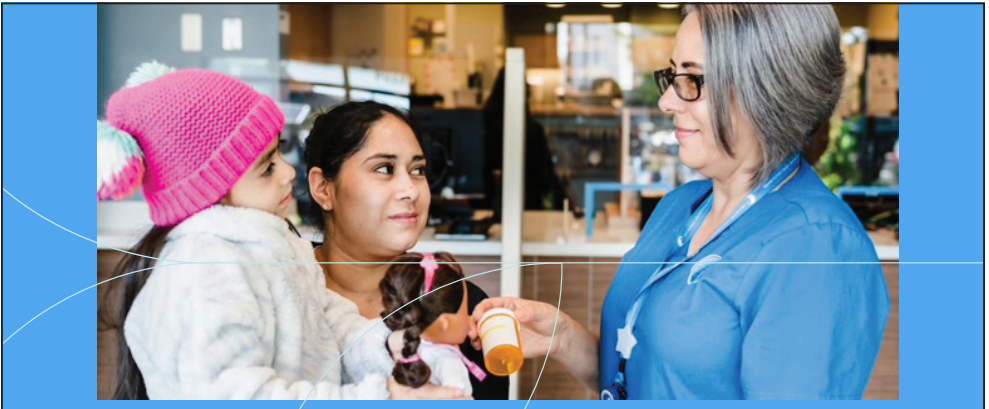
Phil Giffie, NOAH Executive Director, Cesa Barker, NOAH board member, John Allard, Rockland Trust, bilingual meteorologist, Cecy del Carmen, and Eduardo Moreno, from Senator Lydia Edwards' Office.



Berta Ruiz, Leticia Rave, Councilor Gigi Coletta Zapata and her parents, Nina and Ed Coletta, enjoy the fundraiser.



Zaida Adames, Esperanza Rojas, Ana Avevalo, Cesar Armas, Gloria Rivera, Katie White, Daria Clark Santollani, of the Mystic River Watershed Association, Samuel Zavala, and Andrea Orellana at the East Boston Social Centers table.



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